

MARINE CORPS

National Archives Building, Washington, DC

Records Relating to Marine Corps Service

Enlisted Men

Generally, service records for enlisted marines who separated from service prior to 1905 are held in Washington, DC. Service records or “case files” of enlisted marines at the National Archives are found in RG 127, Records of the U.S. Marine Corps, entry 76. Service records may include: enlistment and reenlistment papers, descriptive lists, conduct records, notice of discharge, military history, and in some cases the issuance of campaign badges and awards. There are two series of case files. The first (marines who enlisted prior to 1895) is arranged by date of enlistment or last reenlistment starting in 1798. If the enlistment date is unknown, researchers can use the card index found in RG 127, entry 75, Alphabetical Card List of Enlisted Men of the Marine Corps, 1798–1941. The second series of case files, relating to Marines who enlisted after 1895, is arranged alphabetically. It was not unusual for enlisted marines to use aliases during this period. Service records and enlistment cards are filed under the name the marine used while in service.

To track a marine’s service, consult the Marine Corps muster rolls. The Marine Corps muster rolls, 1798–1940, are arranged chronologically by year and month, and thereunder by post, station, ship detachment, or other unit, except during World War I, when they are arranged in two subseries: (1) posts and stations and (2) mobile units. There are indexes in the volumes to the names of ships and stations. A muster roll generally shows name of ship or station and name; rank, date of enlistment or reenlistment; and if applicable, date of desertion or apprehension; sentence of court-martial (and the offense);

injuries sustained or illness and type of treatment; and date of death or discharge for officers and enlisted men. Depending on the date, the researcher must know the vessel on which the marine served, the unit in which he served, or duty station. Marine Corps muster rolls have been reproduced on T1118, *Muster Rolls of the U.S. Marine Corps, 1798–1902*, and T977, *Muster Rolls of Officers and Enlisted Men of the U.S. Marine Corps, 1893–1940*. For more information consult correspondence files in RG 127. Also Navy deck logs, Navy courts-martial files, and pension files may contain information on Marines.

Marine Corps (Enlisted Men)

- Case Files (prior to 1905)
- Muster Rolls (T1118 and T977)
- Pension Files
- Court-Martial Records

Officers

A good source to verify service of a marine officer is the *List of Officers of the Navy of the United States and of the Marine Corps from 1775 to 1900*, edited by Edward W. Callahan. Several series found in RG 127, Records of the U.S. Marine Corps, can provide documentation of the military service of Marine Corps officers. A one-volume register shows the name, rank, and state of birth of commissioned officers of the Marine Corps in each year, 1819–48. A similar register for each year, 1849–58 (contained in the front part of the first of two volumes of abstracts of military service of Marine Corps officers), shows the same information and date of entry into service, state from which appointed, and state of residence. The remainder of that first volume pertains to officers serving during the period 1869–73, and the second volume, to officers serving during the period 1899–1904. Entries are arranged by rank, but there are name indexes in the volumes. The entries give information about promotions, appointments to boards, assignments and transfers, and retirement. The second volume also shows date and place of birth, state from which appointed, state of residence, and date of commission for each officer. Another series of two volumes contains press copies of military histories and statements of service of officers covering 1904 to 1911

were prepared by the Marine Corps in response to inquiries from military officials. The records are arranged chronologically, but there are name indexes.

Marine Corps muster rolls, Navy deck logs, Navy courts-martial files, and pension file records can also provide additional information on Marine Corps officers.

Marine Corps (Officers)

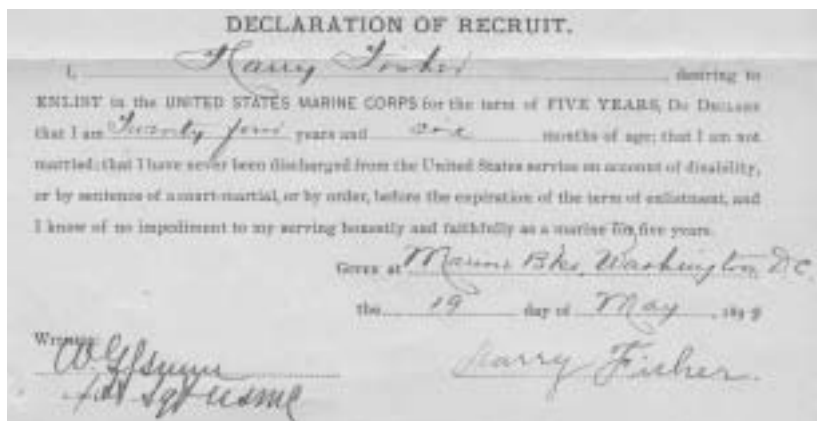
- Edward W. Callahan's *List of Officers of the Navy of the United States and Marines Corps, From 1775 to 1900*
- Records of Service, 1819–1911 (with gaps)
- Muster Rolls (T1118 and T977)
- Pension Files
- Court-Martial Files

Additional Sources of Information

Guide to Genealogical Research in the National Archives, third ed., pages 160–164.

Plante, Trevor K. “U.S. Marines in the Boxer Rebellion,” *Prologue*, Winter 1999, Vol. 31, No. 4.

Smith, Charles R. *Marines in the Revolution: A History of the Continental Marines in the American Revolution, 1775–1783*, Washington, DC: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1975.



Portion of Harry Fisher's Marine Corps enlistment paper in 1899. Fisher was an alias for Franklin J. Phillips, previously dishonorably discharged from the U.S. Army for desertion. He was killed July 16, 1900, in the siege of Peking, China, during the Boxer Rebellion, and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. (RG 127)